

If the international community fails to speak out, the prospects for religious pluralism and tolerance in the region are bleak. President Ronald Reagan once said that the U.S. Constitution is a "covenant that we have made not only with ourselves, but with all of mankind."

I believe that the United States has an obligation to speak out for the voiceless around the world, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting my legislation calling for a special envoy dedicated to speaking out for religious minorities in the Near East and South and Central Asia and elevating this issue as a foreign policy priority for America.

HONORING JOSEPH DANIEL MOSS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Joseph Daniel Moss. Joseph is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 260, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Joseph has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Joseph has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Joseph has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Joseph Daniel Moss for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING MS. JUANITA BRADLEY

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize a member of the General Daniel "Chappie" James American Legion Auxiliary Post 776, located in my congressional district in Riverside, Ohio, for the service she has given to her community.

On November 6, 2010, Ms. Juanita Bradley was honored as the "Woman of the Year" in Dayton, Ohio, for her lifetime of work and dedication to assist needy families in Dayton and the surrounding communities.

Ms. Bradley is the founder and chairman of the American Legion Post 776 "Needy Family Committee" which has provided holiday food baskets to needy families in Dayton for over 25 years. Under Ms. Bradley's guidance and leadership, the number of families receiving food baskets has grown from 12 to 60 families. These baskets, which are delivered on the third Saturday in December, are the size of a large laundry basket, and are filled with a variety of perishable and non-perishable items.

Ms. Bradley and her committee also serve hot meals to a homeless residence at the St.

Vincent Hotel on a monthly basis. Most of the meals served are cooked by Ms. Bradley herself.

Ms. Bradley is also the Chair of "Make a Difference Day," which for two years has "adopted" the children of service men and women who have been deployed overseas. The event offers an alternative to trick-or-treating by hosting a Halloween party where kids can enjoy pizza, sodas, and other treats in a safe and fun environment. Last year, the event also provided the children with phone cards that could be used to call their parents during the holidays.

The American Legion Auxiliary is the world's largest, nonprofit patriotic women's service organization whose members do volunteer work for a multitude of worthwhile causes that benefit America's veterans, children and communities. It is my pleasure to congratulate Ms. Juanita Bradley for her receipt of the "Woman of the Year" award in Dayton, Ohio.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. PAULA BUONOMO'S 14 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE MASSACHUSETTS THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a true friend and valued public servant, Ms. Paula Buonomo, for her years of dedicated service to the constituents of the Massachusetts Third Congressional District. After 14 years as District Representative in my Worcester Congressional Office, Paula is retiring to spend more time with her family and especially her beautiful baby granddaughter, Abigail.

Paula joined my Worcester office early in my first term in 1997. Since that time she has exhibited consistent excellence and shown a thoughtful and compassionate hand in all of her work. She has been tireless in her approach with constituents, always welcoming and personable, a model of patient kindness. Most of all, Paula has been a delight to work with these many years, and I know that I speak not only for myself, but for my entire staff when I say that we will all miss her dearly.

It is bittersweet to say goodbye to a beloved and loyal colleague, but I know that Paula will remain involved in many other important efforts, including her work at the Worcester County Food Bank, where she serves on the board, and her church, St. Matthew's Parish of Worcester. Whatever projects or ventures she takes on, I am confident that Paula will continue to make a positive difference in her community.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the United States House of Representatives joins me in recognizing Ms. Paula Buonomo for her many years of dedicated public service to the constituents of the Massachusetts Third Congressional District, and for the indispensable role she has played as one of my most trusted and valued staff members. I wish her only the best in all of her future endeavors.

HONORING RYAN JACOB ROBERTS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ryan Jacob Roberts. Ryan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1180, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ryan has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Ryan has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Ryan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Ryan designed and constructed a picnic area in the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department's Trail of Heroes park, as a place of significant importance to Ryan as both his father and brother are Kansas City Police officers.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ryan Jacob Roberts for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening, Monday, January 24, 2011, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote No. 17 (on ordering the previous question), and "no" on rollcall vote No. 18 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 43).

SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION, MAJOR GENERAL ARNOLD FIELDS' WARNING

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the outgoing Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, Major General Arnold Fields, issued a last warning yesterday before moving on from his post.

Fields warned that over \$11 billion of U.S. aid is at risk, citing insufficient planning and a lack of oversight. The \$11 billion are funds designated to build facilities to house and train Afghan security forces.

The lack of security in Afghanistan also poses a problem, placing any potentially beneficial projects that are completed at risk. Even if all the facilities scheduled to be built are completed, does Afghanistan have the capability to protect and maintain them?

A March 2010 report by the United Nations states that there is a "massive human rights deficit" in Afghanistan, with 36 percent of the population living in absolute poverty and another 37 percent living just above the poverty line. Only 23 percent of the country has access to clean water. This, despite the billions of dollars in reconstruction and development aid we have funneled into the country.

So where is our money going? We know that President Karzai and his cronies are living large, while the rest of the country falters. It is time to bring our troops home.

HONORING ZACH ILDZA

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zach Ildza. Zach is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 214, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zach has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Zach has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zach has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zach Ildza for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

MR. SCOTT MAHER

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the National Franchise Association, NFA, which serves the Burger King community in its advocacy, training, and service-related functions and which is located in Georgia's 11th Congressional District, I am honored to recognize Mr. Scott Maher, a 25-year employee of the Coca-Cola Company.

This year, Mr. Maher celebrates a landmark anniversary as an employee of the Coca-Cola Company. In his 25 years, he has dedicated himself to providing excellent service, honoring his commitments as a businessman and serving as a friendly face to the Coca-Cola name. In relation to the NFA, Mr. Maher actively advocates on behalf of small business owners around the country by supporting—both financially and personally—NFA's Government Relations Summit every year. Every September, you can count on Mr. Maher to schedule a meeting with my office through NFA to discuss the effects of anti-business legislation on NFA members and, consequently, the Coca-Cola Company.

The NFA is eternally grateful for Mr. Maher's support of the franchising industry and of Burger King franchisees in particular.

Congratulations on 25 years of service with the Coca-Cola Company and I wish you many more to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALBIO SIRE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. SIRE. Mr. Speaker, on January 24, 2011, I missed rollcall vote Nos. 17 and 18. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall 17 and "no" on rollcall 18.

STATEMENT OF CONCERN REGARDING THE TAKEOVER OF LEBANON'S INSTITUTIONS BY THE TERRORIST GROUP HEZBOLLAH

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, more than a week ago, a coalition led by the terrorist organization Hezbollah caused the crumbling of the Lebanese Government. Hezbollah is now seeking to form a new cabinet where the organization and its allies would control many crucial Lebanese ministries—including defense, interior, foreign affairs, and the finances of the country.

This is an unprecedented power grab by a terrorist organization, which has a global reach in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and even on our southern border and perhaps inside the United States itself. Hezbollah is the proxy army of Iran, and Iran has made it into the most well-trained and well-funded terrorist group in the world. The situation in Lebanon, and the growing global power of Hezbollah, should be a great cause of concern to Americans.

The people of Lebanon, particularly the Lebanese youth, have been demonstrating in the streets of Beirut, Tripoli and other areas, sending America a clear message about their rejection of Hezbollah. For some time now, Lebanon has been under the threat of Hezbollah's powerful militia, which has thousands of rockets and missiles, and whose members—according to media reports—are likely to be indicted in the 2005 terror assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. Hezbollah is using this militia to threaten and bully Lebanon so that it can create a new government that would become a puppet of the Iranian regime, much like the Syrian regime. We must not let Iran gain further influence in the Middle East.

I ask Congress and the President to declare its solidarity with the Lebanese people and to reject any recognition of a Hezbollah government. I also call on the President to ask the United Nations to implement UNSCR 1559, which calls for disarming of militias in Lebanon, which are a threat to all of its peace-loving people. I also ask my colleagues in Congress to issue strong statements of support for the Cedars Revolution and to the people of Lebanon as they face the takeover of their country by terrorist organization Hezbollah.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FREEDOM ACT OF 2011

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to reintroduce the International Women's Freedom Act with my colleagues, Representatives CHAKA FATTAH, JIM MORAN, JERRY MCNERNEY, LYNN WOOLSEY, and TIM RYAN. This bill is a comprehensive piece of legislation which will increase awareness of human rights violations against women, as well as provide a set of mechanisms for the U.S. to address the violations of women's human rights abroad.

The bill is modeled after the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, IRFA. IRFA created the U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom which has been successful in identifying violations of religious freedom abroad and recommending actions to Congress, the Secretary of State, and the President.

It has been clear for many years that expanding opportunities for women not only improves their position in society, but also has a positive impact on economic growth and burgeoning democracies. As Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton has stated publicly regarding American foreign policy, "there has to be special attention paid to the needs of women and girls. It's in America's national security interests to do so." And yet around the world, many countries relegate women to second-class status, denying them the right to vote, restricting their travel, and limiting their access to education and health care.

The International Women's Freedom Act would ensure we have the tools to empower women on a global level. Modeled after the successful International Religious Freedom Act, the bill would establish a Commission on International Women's Rights and would expand the duties of the existing Office of International Women's Issues in the State Department and rename it, the Office on International Women's Rights. Both the Commission and the Office on International Women's Rights would be granted the responsibilities of issuing a report on the status of women's rights abroad and advising the President and Secretary of State regarding matters affecting these issues.

We need to work harder to ensure women's full participation in society. This legislation would move us closer to achieving this foreign policy imperative.

HONORING MAHLON KRUSE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Mahlon Kruse. Mahlon is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Civil Air Patrol and earning the most prestigious General Billy Mitchell Award.

Mahlon has been very active with his patrol, participating in many activities. Over the many